

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 037703

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. THE SAHARA: HASSAN CRIES TREACHERY

A GOM OFFICIAL TOLD AMBASSADOR NEUMANN FEBRUARY 16 THAT
AMGALA HAD FALLEN TO AN OVERWHELMING ALGERIAN COUNTERATTACK.
SUPPOSEDLY, A FLEEING ALGERIAN COLUMN HAD BEEN REINFORCED
AND THEN RETURNED TO CRUSH A SMALL MOROCCAN GARRISON. IN A
MESSAGE TO BOUMEDIENNE, HASSAN:

--ACCUSED ALGIERS OF RENEGING ON A PROMISE THAT NO
ALGERIAN TROOPS WOULD BE SEEN ON SAHARAN SOIL; AND

--ASKED THE ALGERIANS TO EITHER DECLARE WAR OR AGREE
TO AN INTERNATIONALLY GUARANTEED PEACE.

ALGERIA, HOWEVER, CREDITS THE POLISARIO WITH THE VICTORY.

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EMBASSY RABAT COMMENT: NOW THAT BOTH SIDES HAVE DRAWN BLOOD,
THE ATMOSPHERE COULD BE MORE CONDUCTIVE TO DISCUSSIONS.
HASSAN'S MESSAGE IS SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE IT LACKED A THREAT
OF COUNTERMEASURES AND LEFT THE DOOR OPEN FOR FURTHER DIPLO-
MATIC SOLUTIONS. (CONFIDENTIAL) ALGIERS 399 AND (SECRET)
RABAT 846, 2/16.) INGERSOLL

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